

loans. I am a strong supporter of making college more accessible for everyone, and am pleased that the bill invests \$90 million in North Dakota for the Pell Grant program. This increased level of funding means that 17,143 student will be eligible for a Pell Grant award in the 2010–2011 academic year, an increase of 37 percent over the 12,467 North Dakota students eligible in the 2007–2008 school year. And by 2019, the number of students receiving Pell Grants will nearly double from 2007–2008 levels to 21,410. Under this legislation, the maximum Pell Grant scholarship will ultimately reach \$6,900 by 2019, representing over a 45 percent increase in the maximum Pell Grant Award over the next 10 years from today's maximum Pell Grant level of \$4,731. This is good news for students.

However, there are a few issues of remaining concern with H.R. 3221. First, I strongly believe that student loans should be affordable. I have heard concerns from several North Dakota institutions that under the new Direct Perkins loans program, students are required to pay interest accrued on Direct Perkins loans while they are in school. The final proposal of this bill must weigh these concerns with the number of new students who will enter the Perkins loan program as a result of increasing the loan authority of this program.

Second, it is important to ensure that rural and rural-serving community colleges receive their fair share of funding from the new Higher Education Federal Assistance for Community College Modernization and Construction program. Rural and rural-serving colleges face unique challenges in providing critical educational opportunities for our nation's rural students, and should receive an appropriate portion of the funding provided under this program. I also believe that the Veterans Resource Officer Grant program should be modified to better ensure that rural and small schools have access to this program.

Third, as the only state-owned bank in the country, the Bank of North Dakota should continue to be allowed to provide student loans. The Bank of North Dakota currently serves about 75 percent of North Dakota students and has been a wonderful partner for students and their families. The Bank of North Dakota's service should not be disrupted. This is why I led an amendment that was made in order that ensures that non-profit entities like the Bank of North Dakota can continue to provide valuable student borrower services, including delinquency prevention, default aversion, and loan counseling. In addition, I appreciate Chairman MILLER's commitment on the floor to work with me in conference to ensure that this important institution will continue to have a role in federal student lending programs.

Having received the Chairman's assurances to work together on these issues in conference, I am going to vote to move this bill forward. I hope by furthering this bill, we can build on its historic investments in the Pell Grant program and strengthen its provisions for North Dakota schools and students.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOHN TRACY
FOR BEING NAMED THE 2009 AG-
RICULTURIST OF THE YEAR BY
THE KERN COUNTY FAIR

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 22, 2009

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. John Tracy of Buttonwillow, California, the recipient of the 2009 Agriculturist of the Year Award from the Kern County Fair.

A fourth generation Californian, John Tracy was born in Bakersfield in 1947, the third of four sons to Tilton and Kathryn Tracy. John attended Wildwood Grammar School and graduated in 1965 from Wasco High School, where he was active in athletics and student government. Immediately following high school, Mr. Tracy attended California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, earning a degree in Farm Management in 1969. While at Cal Poly, Mr. Tracy met his wife, Donna Allen. They married in 1970 and have two children, Allen and Jessica.

Mr. Tracy is a member of the Historic Tracy Ranch, established in 1862 in Buttonwillow. He is also a founding partner of the Buttonwillow Land and Cattle Company. Primarily an agricultural operation, the enterprise has ventured into other business interests such as commercial property, a hotel, and a feedlot in Texas. Mr. Tracy's business sense and work ethic are excellent examples of his fine character and success.

Mr. Tracy is involved with several community and professional organizations including the Kern County Cattleman's Association, California Cattleman's Association, National Cattleman's Beef Association, California Feeders Association, California Beef Council, Cattle PAC and the Kern County Ag Foundation. He also has been active in the Buttonwillow Lions Club, Kern County Law Enforcement Association, Pismo Beach Moose Lodge, Los Flojos and Rancheros Visitadores. Mr. Tracy also served as Mayor of Buttonwillow in 1982.

Mr. Tracy has been involved with the Kern County Fair throughout his life. He showed animals during his youth, and then helped his children, as well as countless others, do the same. His family's support of the junior livestock auction is also a testament to Mr. Tracy's contributions to the Kern County Fair and the community.

John Tracy is a man of integrity, honesty and compassion. He genuinely cares for his community and is willing to share his vast knowledge with others. In addition, he and I share the same passion for the well-being of California's San Joaquin Valley. For this and so much more, I am honored to consider John Tracy a friend and certainly commend him for all his accomplishments and extend my most sincere congratulations for receiving this prestigious award from the Kern County Fair. As a respected agriculturalist in our nation, it is fitting and proper that John be so honored.

NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS
BETWEEN TURKEY AND ARMENIA

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 22, 2009

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, on August 31, 2009, the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Armenia announced their intention to normalize relations. The leaders of these two countries, working together with the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, have agreed to begin discussions that will culminate in the signing of two protocols within the next six weeks. The protocols will then be submitted to the respective Parliaments for ratification on each side. These two protocols provide for a framework for the normalization of relations, including the establishment of diplomatic relations and opening of the common border.

This development has significant implications not only for Turkey and Armenia, but for the entire Caucasus region, which has had a turbulent and sometimes troubled history. The successful efforts of Turkey and Armenia to open borders, develop trade relations and other economic benefits, and create a long-lasting dialogue will serve to promote peace and stability throughout the region. I believe that we all should welcome this development and strongly support it.

Madam Speaker, I applaud the leadership of Turkey and Armenia and encourage these two nations to work diligently in the weeks ahead to create a framework that will advance peaceful and fruitful relations for many years to come.

HONORING KENNEDY CHILD STUDY CENTER

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 22, 2009

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise in honor of the Kennedy Child Study Center to commemorate its remarkable contributions to the youth of America. Celebrating its 50th anniversary, the Kennedy Child Study Center has helped thousands of children overcome major developmental obstacles. Through a wide range of programs, the Kennedy Child Study Center, and its highly qualified staff, have provided children with guidance and encouragement. For this, the Kennedy Child Study Center and its staff, both present and past, are deserving of recognition.

The Kennedy Child Study Center has done much for the communities in Manhattan and the Bronx in New York City. Over the past half-century, thousands of children have been given the opportunity to receive the proper care, education and social interactions they deserve through the Kennedy Child Study Center. This organization fully understands the significance early diagnosis of learning disabilities has on a child's achievements in school and everyday life. Through preschool and early intervention programs they are able to detect developmental problems and then provide the proper guidance and developmental assistance. They offer a wide spectrum of programs to enhance a child's lifestyle. A few examples of these services include special early